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Remarks:

The amendments and remarks presented herein are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated March 8, 2005.

Claims 1-8, 10-16, 18 and 19 are pending in the application. Claims 9 and 17 have been canceled herein without prejudice and claims 1, 2, 4 and 14 have been amended as set forth above. The amendments are fully supported in the specification and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been added. Claims 10-12, 18 and 19 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner.

DRAWING OBJECTIONS

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR §1.83(a) for allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. With respect to the objection in view of claim 6, Applicants submit that Figure 1 shows an electronic accessory 17, which is defined in the specification on pages 12 and 13 as being a reflective element positioning device, a signal or security light, a camera, a variable electrochromic reflective element, and/or an exterior temperature sensor. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 6 is supported by the drawings as originally filed.

With respect to the objection of the drawings in view of claim 16, Applicants respectfully submit that Figures 5 and 6 show the window seals at 130, such that claim 16 is fully supported by the drawings as originally filed.

With respect to the objection of the drawings in view of claims 9 and 17, Applicants have canceled claims 9 and 17 herein without prejudice. Thus, the objection in view of these claims is obviated.

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CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. As noted above, Applicants have canceled claim 17 without prejudice. The rejection under §112 is thus obviated.

Claims 1, 4-6, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Dickenson, U.S. Patent No. 5,889,624, while claims 1-3 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Lukey, U.S. Patent No. 4,125,244. Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lukey, in view of the applicants' prior art statement, while claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heim et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,857,731, in view of Lukey. Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heim et al., in view of Lukey, and further in view of Teramoto et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,746,471.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 103(a) for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to clarify that the exterior mirror body mount includes a mirror mounting portion. The exterior mirror body is mountable to the mirror mounting portion of the exterior mirror body mount of the door assembly. The exterior mirror body comprises a casing and a reflective element. The modular door system includes a first connecting portion at the mirror mounting portion of the exterior mirror body mount of the door assembly and a second connecting portion at the exterior mirror body. The first connecting portion is connectable to the second connecting portion to secure the exterior mirror body to the exterior body mount of the door assembly from the exterior side of the door assembly. The first and second connecting portions are configured to positively secure the exterior mirror body to the exterior mirror body mount of the door assembly upon engagement of the first and second connecting portions. The first connecting portion is connectable to the second connecting

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portion to secure the exterior mirror body to the exterior body mount of the door assembly from the exterior side of the door assembly.

Applicants respectfully submit that Dickenson, either alone or in combination with any other prior art reference of record, does not disclose, teach or suggest the modular door system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in claim 1. Dickenson merely discloses a conventional plug-in mirror assembly that includes a housing and a support arm, and where the support arm plugs into a receiving socket formed as a recess in a mounting structure of the door, in order to mount the conventional mirror assembly thereto. After the support arm of Dickenson is plugged into the receiving socket, fasteners are used to secure the support arm to the receiving socket. As shown in Figure 3 of Dickenson, the fasteners extend through the door and into the fastener receiving members from inside the vehicle door.

The present invention is in stark contrast to the conventional mirror assembly of Dickenson. The present invention provides: (a) an exterior mirror body mount that is part of the vehicle door assembly, and (b) a separate and distinct exterior mirror body that is mountable thereto. As clearly laid out in the specification of the present application, the mirror head or body of the present invention is provided as a component that is separate from the modular door assembly to facilitate easier shipment of the modular door assembly to the vehicle assembly plant, since the mirror head or body thus no longer protrudes outwardly from the modular door during shipping. See, for example, page 13, lines 23-30 of the present application. The separate mirror head or body may be shipped directly to the vehicle assembly plant and installed to the mirror mount of the modular door assembly after the modular door is affixed to the vehicle, since the mirror body may be mounted to the door from the exterior side of the door. The present invention thus allows a car manufacturer to purchase a door assembly from one manufacturer and a mirror body from a second manufacturer. Such an arrangement is not disclosed or suggested in Dickenson.

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Thus, Applicants submit that Dickenson teaches away from the present invention by teaching the attachment of a mirror assembly, which includes a mirror head and a support arm, to the vehicle door, and by securing the support arm of the mirror assembly to the door via fasteners extending from inside the vehicle door. Dickenson thus does not teach or suggest connecting a separate mirror body to a mirror mount of the door assembly from the exterior side of the door assembly. Contrary to the teaching of Dickenson, the present invention provides a modular door system having an exterior mirror mount with a mirror mounting portion at an exterior side of a door assembly, and with first and second connecting portions that are configured to positively secure a separate exterior mirror body to the exterior mirror body mount of the door assembly upon engagement of the first and second connecting portions, such that the mirror body may be secured to the door assembly from the exterior side of the door assembly and without the use of fasteners. Contrary to the Examiner's assertions with respect to the rejection of claim 7, the engagement of the seal (28) within the socket sidewalls (98) of Dickenson is not a snap fit connection between a mirror body mount and an exterior mirror body, but is rather an attachment of a seal within a socket formed within the door. The seal of Dickenson does not positively secure a separate mirror body to a mirror body mount of the door assembly.

Also, Applicants respectfully submit that Lukey, either alone or in combination with any other prior art of record, does not disclose, teach or suggest the modular door system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 1. Lukey discloses a mirror that has ratchet means for mounting a frame to a support of the mirror. There is no disclosure or teaching in Lukey of mounting the mirror head to a mirror mount of a door assembly with connectors that positively secure the connecting portions together upon engagement of the connecting portions.

With respect to the rejection of claims 14 and 15, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Heim et al. and Lukey does not disclose, teach, suggest or render obvious the modular door system of the present invention. Heim et al. discloses a triangular mirror bracket (13) that has the mirror head extending therefrom. Heim et al. further discloses that the

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"complete mirror is slipped onto the door frame to fasten triangular mirror bracket 13 to the contour frame 12". See Heim et al., column 3, lines 23-26. Thus, Heim et al. teaches away from the present invention, since the triangular mirror bracket and mirror are slipped onto the door frame together. There is thus no disclosure or teaching in Heim et al. of providing a mirror mounting portion at a cap assembly that is mounted to an exterior side panel of a door assembly and connecting a mirror body to the mirror mounting portion.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Dickenson or Lukey, either alone or in combination with any other cited reference, discloses the modular door system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 1 and in the claims depending therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.


Claims 1-8, 10-16, 18 and 19 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 14 have been amended above and claims 9 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-8, 10-16, 18 and 19 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly and respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: Van Dyke, Gardner, Linn & Burkhardt, LLP

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